



*"Music gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything" -Plato*

### A Note from Ms. Liz

February 1, 2015

Dear Families,

It's so important that students share their music. Their efforts to be prepared for lessons and willingness to try different genres of music will be rewarded by their performances. PSU Prep Students have opportunities to do this at recitals, at Master Classes, and on our May Evaluation Day.

Students can get ready by practicing daily and planning for their concerts. Giving mini-recitals for family and friends provides an opportunity to think about how to walk, sit, bow, and even what clothes and shoes to wear for a professional look. When Ms. Liz was just starting out, she gave phone concerts for aunts and a grandmother who live in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Now, you probably have Skype connections that would allow you to give someone a special treat in both seeing and hearing you perform your favorite pieces.



I am hoping to have more students participate in the Piano Monster Festival. I participated in this camp, every June, for seven years as a camper, and I will be returning for my fourth year as a counselor. Junior Piano Monster Camp is a great experience for 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This will give them the opportunity to meet other New England piano students, work with Wynn Anne Rossi, experience other teaching, and participate in two recitals.

Financial information about the camp will be available soon. Please let me know if you are at all interested.

Best wishes for the semester ahead--new music and a new game about my favorite composer, Johann Sebastian Bach. Any questions, please call me or send me an e-mail.

Musically,

Liz Hodges  
603-715-6846

#### Notices

KITS, Mini Recitals for Family, and Piano Monster Camp

Page 1

#### Who Is...

J.S. Bach?

Page 3

#### Performances

Calendar of all PSU events

Page 4

## Family Fun

### More Dance Music

This year our special focus is dance music. We have learned about the *minuet*, *waltz*, and *mazurka*. Two other important forms are the *ecossaise* and the *tarantella*. The **ecossaise** is a type of contra dance in a Scottish style that was popular in France and Great Britain in the later 1700's and early 1800's. It usually was danced in 2/4 time, with much energy. The contrasts of very loud and very soft were close together in the pieces. These five boys have a great time playing an Ecosaise by Beethoven.



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_IAVbEX5PxM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IAVbEX5PxM)

The **tarantella** is also upbeat but also quite fast, usually in 6/8 time, accompanied by tambourines. It is especially popular in southern Italy and Argentina and no southern Italian wedding party would be complete without it. Legend says that the frantic spinning motions of the dance were a cure for the poisonous bite of the wolf spider (*tarantula*). In the courtship version of the dance, the woman and man try to impress each other with their agility and elegance. The tempo speeds up as the dance continues. This dance troop seems to be having a lot of fun with it.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7K7zrefNxlo>

This *Tarantella*, by Albert Pieczonka, is one of Ms. Liz's favorite piano pieces. She enjoyed playing it when she was in middle school. Please check it out and let her know what you think of it.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQBbju3QQrU>



This charming solo flute piece, **Danse de la chevre** (*Dance of the Goat*), by Arthur Honegger, was composed in 1921 for a ballerina. The beginning of the piece is calm and then features 'dancing skips' in 9/8 time. This pattern alternates several times until it ends with the dreamlike theme that quietly closes the piece. As we listen, we can picture a grassy hillside just after the snow has melted and the grass is turning bright green. Here, a frolicking goat enjoys the sunshine and a new freedom from the long winter

confinement in the barn. Interestingly, this piece contains a chord (quite rare in flute music), which the flutist produces by singing rather than blowing across the flute hole.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLJ6FM5tXYA>

## J.S. Bach (Johann Sebastian Bach)

**Born:** March 31, 1685

**Died:** July 28, 1750

**Country:** Germany

**Compositions:** St. Matthew's Passion, Inventions, Preludes and Fugues, and concertos

**Well-Known for:** Organist, Composer,



### Bach Bits

- **Bach had 76 relatives who were musicians, 53 of them named Johann!**
- **Bach loved coffee and wrote a whole cantata about it.**
- **Bach once walked 200 miles to hear the great organist Dietrich Buxtehude play.**

*Read more in Lives of the Musicians: Good Times, Bad Times (and What the Neighbors Thought) by Kathleen Krull.*

## Calendar Update and PSU Musical Events

**An Evening of Intimate Jazz. February 19, 7 p.m.**

**Tuba Recital. February 23, 3 p.m.**

**Contemporary Piano Festival. March 7 (details available)**

**Symphonic Band. March 11, 7:30 p.m.**

**All New England Jazz Festival, March 24, 6 p.m.**

**Alphin Hong, Pianist. April 8, 7 p.m.**

**Piano Master Class, April 10, 2:30 p.m.**

**Martin and Geronymo, Piano Duo, April 12, 7 p.m.**

**PSU Choirs. April 18, 8 p.m.**

**PSU Symphonic Band. April 26, 3 p.m.**

**Percussion Ensemble. April 29, 7 p.m.**

**PSU Jazz Ensemble and Combo, April 30, 7 p.m.**

**PSU Chamber Players (flute choir, piano ensemble, and others) May 6, 7 p.m.**

**Piano Prep Recitals. May 8, 7 p.m. and May 10, 1:30 and 3 p.m.**

### **N.H. Evaluations, May 19 2015 (REQUIRED)**

All PSU Preparatory Piano Students are required to participate in an evaluation program that is scheduled for Saturday May 10, 2015. Students are assessed in the areas of music reading, vocabulary, listening, and playing. Tests are geared to the student's level and are keyed to practice materials that all PSU preparatory students receive. Each year, the music and life history of a composer are highlighted. This year, the composer is J.S. Bach. Any student who plays a piece by him will receive a special prize.



### **Junior Piano Monster Festival, June 28-July (Wynn Anne Rossi)**

Pianists will be given the opportunity to perform in large ensemble under a conductor and to experience the excitement of teamwork. Students are grouped according to their ability levels and will have instruction in small and large piano ensembles. Please ask me for more information.